

BCM

A Belgian Japanese- and pop Culture Magazine
Nr 30: January - February - March 2017

Interviews

X Made Alcoholic Santaclaus
Ancient Myth

Fashion & features

Japan: Himeji
J-fashion portraits



The renaissance of
VERSAILLES

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Special thanks to: everyone who contributed and especially our readers!

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed by people interviewed are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the BCM staff. Thus we can and will not be held responsible, nor accountable for them.

INTRODUCTION

Hello everyone, and welcome to our very first edition of 2017!

I hope everyone had an enjoyable holiday season, filled with joy and good cheer.

We are kicking off the new year, as is traditional, with the remnants of holiday events that happened all over Europe, as well as a brand new Beauty tutorial by the talented Claire Dans la Lune (make sure to find her on instagram and youtube also under [clairedanslalune16](#)). And because beauty doesn't stop at a tutorial, our fashion feature is a portrait feature, focussing on faces rather than full outfits this time!

Naturally, BCM wouldn't be BCM without events, concerts and band interviews. For this edition we spoke to X Made Alcoholic Santaclaus when they toured Europe, Ancient Myth when they performed at Metal Female Voices Fest and legendary visual kei band VERSAILLES!

You can also win different signed instax photos this edition: one signed by James Phelps (Fred Weasley), another one signed by Ancient Myth and two signed by XMAS! Don't forget to participate!

Enjoy this edition, and may the new year be epic!

Hilde Heyvaert
Editor in chief

Cute, quirky and a little bit gothic
art and jewellery



The art of
YUKARI
www.artofyukari.co.uk
www.etsy.com/shop/ArtofYukari

VISIT ROUBAIX!

We at BCM often receive questions of where in Belgium and Europe is good to visit.

We aren't travel agents, but we can make recommendations!

So in this **Visit!** feature we will focus on a European city, per edition.

This time: **ROUBAIX**, in the North of France - www.ville-roubaix.fr

Other reasons to visit Roubaix: having a quiet wander in a French town, go to a live gig at Bar 301, do a bit of shopping (there are several outlets as well as regular high street stores), or visit the amazing Musée de la Piscine!

Art and photography by Hilde Heyvaert.



Architecture: like most French cities, Roubaix is riddled with beautiful historical buildings.

Art: both classic and modern, all mixed up in an amazingly interesting presentation.



J-FASHION
portraits





























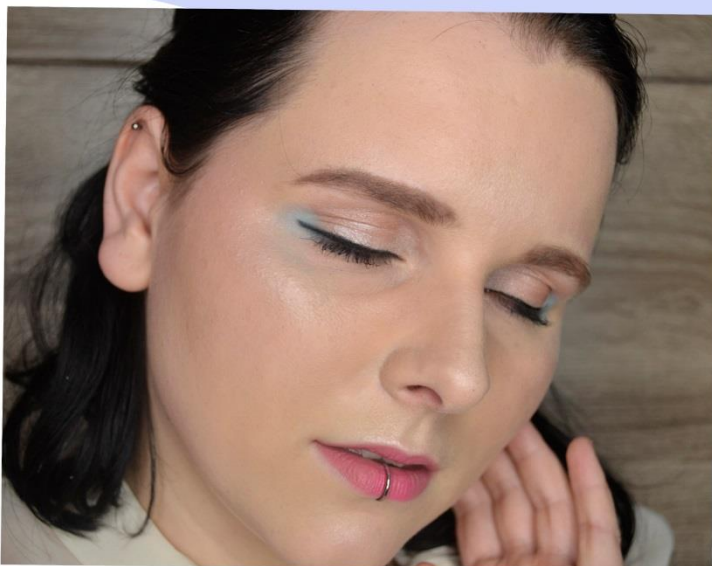
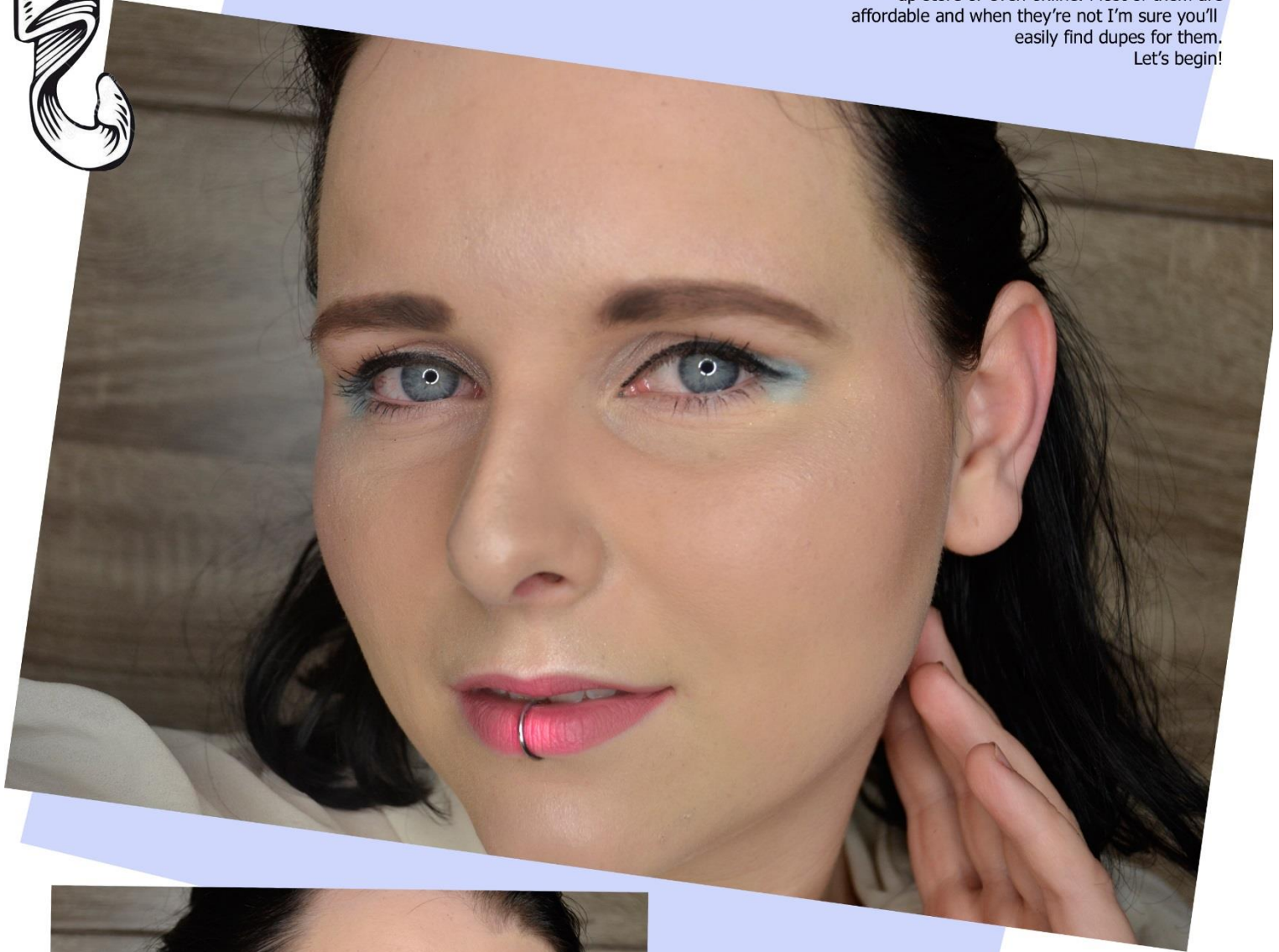
Store Gold Beauty

By Claire Van Laere
www.instagram.com/clairedanslalune16
We would love to see your recreations!
Please tag them with #BCMbeauty
on social media!

For this look I was inspired by the Japanese legend of the *yuki onna*.

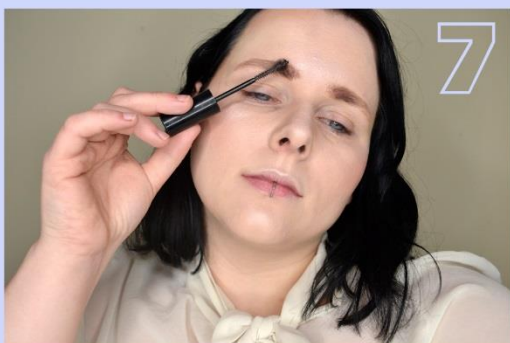
She is a beautiful woman dressed in white, with very pale, almost transparent skin. The Yuki onna tends to draw travelers to her who are lost in the mountains and feeds off their energy. She usually leaves her victims frozen to death.

In this feature, I will not show you how to look like a super model out of a magazine. Some of you might not have much experience in dealing with makeup products, so I want to focus on a fresh, simple makeup with cold tones. I used products which you can easily find at any drugstore, makeup store or even online. Most of them are affordable and when they're not I'm sure you'll easily find dupes for them. Let's begin!



Products used for this look:

- * **Benefit**, high beam highlighter
- * **Bourjois**, healthy mix liquid foundation and powder, Rouge edition Velvet lipstick in Don't pink of it! and Bourjois blush in rose'd or & brun illusion
- * **essence**, eyeliner pen in black
- * **Kiko Milano**, skin tone corrector green primer
- * **Makeup Revolution**, ultra professional Flawless palette
- * **Maybelline**, brow drama sculpting brow mascara
- * **NYX Cosmetics**, Hot Singles eye shadow in Kandi
- * **I'Oreal**, Caresse lipstick in coral & floral
- * **Urban Decay**, Naked skin weightless complete coverage concealer and eye shadow primer potion



1: I start with a washed, moisturized face. After I've moisturized my face I will prime it with a face primer and apply concealer in problem areas. Then I blend it with a small sponge.

2: I'm applying a light foundation with a dense brush, but of course you can use a sponge if a brush doesn't agree with you. Because I have dry skin, I chose a thin liquid foundation, for oily skin, I would recommend you try a thicker or even a powder foundation.

3: I'm applying a liquid highlighter. Of course, a powder would do well too, but try and stay within rosy tints to create a cold complexion. If you have a very warm skin tone, try a pale gold highlighter.

4: I finish my face with a light powder. If you use a powder puff, then don't forget to go over it all with a large brush, for an even finish.

5 + 6: For those wintery rosy cheeks, I am using a light pink blush on the apples of my cheeks and almost bring it up to my eyes. A mauve blush would do nicely as well. Because my face is very round I'm adding some shape with a brown blush under my cheekbones, on my temples, above my forehead and on the sides of my nose. **Tip:** you can also add some bronzer under your chin to bring your face more forward.

7: Next, the eyebrows. If you have dark eyebrows you can pretty much skip this step. I don't really want to spend half an hour to shape my brows, this is supposed to be a simple look after all. So, I'm just going to apply some tinted eyebrow gel. Because I wanted to hint towards those oval Japanese brows you sometimes see in kabuki plays, I'm adding just a small dot of brown shadow to my inner brows.

8 + 9: Next, the eyes. I first use a primer and then apply a shimmering eyeshadow which comes very close to the color of my own skin. I apply the eyeshadow all over my lid and in the crease I add a light brown matt shadow. In the outer corners of my eye I'm adding, literally a dot of frosty blue eyeshadow. A good **tip** at this point is not to be afraid to mess up.

10 + 11: To finish up the eyes I'm adding eyeliner and a smidge of mascara. I'm adding a small flick to my eyeliner at the end because it compliments my eye.

12: Finally, the lips. I'm applying a dusty rose liquid lipstick and on top I'm dabbing on a brighter lipstick in the center of my lips.

And...done!
You're ready to face the winter.



Photo by Dan Brace
www.TwoLostBoys.com



Photo by Dan Brace
www.TwoLostBoys.com



Photo by Dan Brace
www.TwoLostBoys.com



Photo by Dan Brace
www.TwoLostBoys.com

Photographic impressions of the 15TH ANNIVERSARY of TOKYO DISNEY SEA

April 15 2016 - March 17 2017, Tokyo Disney Sea, Tokyo Disneyland, Chiba, Japan.

Photography by Dan Brace (www.charactercentral.net)



Photo by Dan Brace
www.TwoLostBoys.com



Photo by Dan Brace
www.TwoLostBoys.com



Photo by Dan Brace
www.TwoLostBoys.com



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Photo by Dan Brace
www.TwoLostBoys.com



Photo by Dan Brace
www.TwoLostBoys.com

Photographic impressions of HALLOWEEN IN TOKYO DISNEYLAND

September 9 - October 31 2016, Tokyo Disneyland, Tokyo Disneyland, Chiba, Japan.

Photography by Dan Brace (www.twolostboys.com)



Photo by Dan Brace
www.TwoLostBoys.com



Photo by Dan Brace
www.TwoLostBoys.com



Photo by Dan Brace
www.TwoLostBoys.com



Photo by Dan Brace
www.TwoLostBoys.com



Photo by Dan Brace



Photo by Dan Brace



Photographic impressions of the **HAUNTED MANSION HOLIDAY**

September 9 - October 31 2016, Haunted Mansion, Fantasyland, Tokyo Disneyland, Tokyo Disneyland, Chiba, Japan

Photography by Dan Brace (www.twolostboys.com)



Photographic impressions of
HALLOWEEN IN TOKYO DISNEY SEA
September 9 - October 31 2016, Tokyo Disney Sea, Tokyo Disneyland, Chiba, Japan.

Photography by Dan Brace (www.twolostboys.com)



Photo by Dan Brace
www.TwoLostBoys.com



Photo by Dan Brace
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www.TwoLostBoys.com



Photo by Dan Brace
www.TwoLostBoys.com



Photo by Dan Brace
www.TwoLostBoys.com



Photo by Dan Brace



Photo by Dan Brace

Photographic impressions of
HALLOWEEN AROUND TOKYO DISNEY
and some Halloween snacks and drinks, too.

September 9 - October 31 2016, Tokyo (Disneyland), Japan.

Photography by Dan Brace (www.twolostboys.com)



Photo by Dan Brace
www.TwoLostBoys.com



Photo by Dan Brace
www.TwoLostBoys.com



Photo by Dan Brace
www.TwoLostBoys.com



Photo by Dan Brace
www.TwoLostBoys.com



Photo by Dan Brace
www.TwoLostBoys.com



Photo by Dan Brace



Photo by Dan Brace



Photographic impressions of FOOD IN TOKYO DISNEY

Tokyo Disney, Chiba, Japan.

Photography by Dan Brace (www.twolostboys.com)



Photographic impressions of Disneyland Paris' inaugural **RUN DISNEY** races!

September 24-25 2016, Disneyland Park + DLP surrounding area,
Disneyland Paris, Marne-la-Vallée, France.

Photography by Jo/D87Communications.



Photographic impressions of **ELFIA ARCEN**

September 24-25 2016, gardens of castle Arcen, Arcen, The Netherlands.

Photography by Clara Lina Wirz.



Photographic impressions of Disneyland Paris' HALLOWEEN SEASON

October 1 - November 2 2016, Disneyland Park, Disneyland Paris, Marne-la-Vallée, France.

Photography by ED92.







Event: Metal Female Voices Fest
What: Metal Festival
When: October 21 - 23 2016
Where: Oktoberhallen, Wieze, Belgium
Ticket price: depending on the formula.
Website: www.metalfemalevoicesfest.be

Metal Female Voices Fest continues to be Belgium's premiere metal festival. Sure, *Graspop* is bigger and attracts bigger names, but this festival, featuring only bands with female vocalists has many advantages over other metal festivals in Europe, it's diversity in the line-up and welcoming atmosphere the main ones.

Of course, in a lot of ways, MFVF is a small festival like any others: it has a variety of stalls to shop from, going from pop culture items that are staple literally everywhere, to music (even on vinyl), band merch, accessories, art and so on. But what sets MFVF apart, in my opinion, is the approach to organising the festival itself. It really caters to the people that come there. It really cares about people that buy a ticket, and it shows.

The venue is situated a little out of the way, so to speak, so there is a bus service from and to Brussels, organised by the event. For the size of the event, there is pretty good, and very decently priced, catering going on, both inside and via food trucks outside. And of course, you are welcome to bring your own, so people with special dietary requirements need not worry.

The organisation also organises meet and greets with the bands, giving visitors the opportunity to meet their favourite artist and have something signed, for free, and/or take a photo with them in a well lit area. Which is definitely a bonus.

They also make sure that their program is varied, this really is the festival you go to not just to see headliners loved by many in the scene, but also to discover new bands from all across the world. MFVF is one of the few festivals to feature Asian bands, which is another testament to just how much the festival tries to cater to a diverse public.

There may not be a camping attached to the grounds, but that doesn't stop people from organising small barbeques on the parking lot. Which just contributes to the atmosphere. You see people of all ages, and you don't just see metal fans in the typical attire attached to the musical genre either. No, in the three years I have been to the festival, I have seen people wearing otome kei, steampunk, dieselpunk, classic lolita, various goth fashions, visual kei and plain old regular clothes. And it was fine. You could go stand in the midst of a crowd full of hardcore metalheads and the only result you would get it that they'd just treat you like everyone else, or give you a compliment on your wardrobe. People will spontaneously start discussing a band on stage, in a friendly and respectful way with total strangers. In many cases, someone will switch places with you just because you are smaller or they want to give you a better spot to take photos. The atmosphere of camaraderie is warm and amazing.

All of this makes me start to look forward to the next edition, the second the car leaves the parking lot from the current one.

If you love metal music, go there, seriously, you won't regret it!

Review and photography by Hilde Heyvaert and Bert Van den Wyngaert.



Event: FACTS – Your Belgian Comic Con
What: Pop-culture convention
When: October 22-23 2016
Where: Flanders Expo Ghent
Ticket price: varied, depending on the formula
Website: facts.be

This is a personal opinion piece rather than just a review of this event. Please note that the author visited the event on Sunday.

WHAT IS FACTS?

FACTS, which stands for Fantasy, Animation, Comics, Toys and Sci-Fi, is the longest running, most famous, and maybe even infamous, annual pop culture event in Belgium.

What started out as a small pub gathering of fans in 1993 has grown to be a massive commercial event. If you are part of any fandom or geeky hobby, visiting this convention is considered to be a kind of baptism to the Belgian World of Geekery and Pop-Culture Fun.

Let me start off that I am not a FACTS veteran: my first visit to this convention was in 2008, the very last year it was held in the cosy halls of ICC Ghent. I'm sure others are better placed to judge the overall evolution of this convention, so this report will only recount events ranging between 2008 and 2016.

There's this specific feeling you get when you visit a convention. You leave the boring behind, and enter a world of playfulness, acceptance, and like-mindedness. Do you want to wear an extravagant OTT Sweet outfit, of which every detail is perfectly coordinated with whatever print you are wearing? Are you finally ready to pop the cherry on that cosplay you've worked on for the past year, making sure every prop and stitch is right? Maybe you've looked forward to this day because this is the one day in the year you get to see all your friends in one place and can enjoy all those hobbies your family doesn't quite get, together? Or maybe you're hoping to find that one elusive bit you still need to finalise your goodies collection. This is the type of thing you go to a convention for, and which shapes the convention feeling I'm referring to. This specific feeling is dependent on the general atmosphere of a convention: on how the convention floor is organised, on what activities will take place, on what audience it attracts,...

Over the years, I felt this feeling slip away from FACTS. It became less of a place of fun times, social interaction, and discovery, and more of a commercial mess at which you did nothing but shop and stare at famous people. At first, I thought this was due to the fact that I was getting used to conventions and the "newness" of it all was disappearing. But then, I discovered this feeling was still present at other upcoming conventions, such as the now cancelled *Antwerp Convention*, or even at those few editions of *Japan Expo Belgium*, which was comparable in size to FACTS. If they could pull it off, then why was it gone at FACTS?

WHY DID I STOP GOING?

What happened to this convention, which was once the Belgian Epitome of Geekiness?

More and more people started finding their way to this event, and it feels like FACTS did not know how to deal with this. Similar to *Made In Asia*, overcrowding started to happen, which had a negative impact on the general atmosphere. You couldn't find your friends anymore or stop for a second to talk to a fellow fan, and were pushed around the stands before you could take an in-depth look at their merchandise. The goods that were sold, the activities that were organised, and the exhibitions hosted became much more homogenous and aimed at the "flavour-of-the-month" it seems, rather than having a wide range of everything our subculture entails. Gone were the day of rare finds or obscure titles: the repeated stands, bootleg merchandise, and uninspired workshops were here to stay. I think that it is due to this, that the convention feeling as described above started slipping away.

Some other things that did not help to repair the damage, but weren't necessarily the fault of the organisers either, were the rise of several new conventions that had managed to steal away FACTS's visitors, as convention-going is an expensive hobby and people often save up towards only a couple of them a year. There also were the terrorist threats

of the past couple of years, who's spread of fear for mass events triggered a legal slew of new safety measurements to be enacted.

It is clear that FACTS has tried to come up with solutions to these problems over the past years. When more conventions rose from the earth, a second annual Spring edition was organised to make sure fans spent their convention budget at FACTS and not at rivaling organisations. When *MCM Comic Con* announced a Belgian edition of this event, FACTS (and several others, to be fair) suddenly felt it necessary to include the words "Comic Con" in their name, even if this meant they had to alter their already well-established names and logo's for this.

By the time FACTS had announced what security measures they'd implement in lieu of the terrorist threats (which sadly enough escalated into the Brussels attacks of 2016), I con-

fess I stopped going. Things like bag limitations and stricter rules regarding weaponry were understandable. The idea of having to carry my stuff in plastic see-through bags (even though theft is rampant on conventions), of not being allowed to bring food despite FACTS only selling overpriced and unhealthy snacks, and of having to go get a doctor's note to prove it was necessary for me to enter the event while carrying medication in my bag were steps I was not willing to take. This, combined with the disappointed feelings my past couple of visits to FACTS had left me with, caused me to not want to go anymore to what used to be the biggest red-circled date on my agenda.

THE 2016 EXPERIENCE

Certain factors made me decide to give my old friend FACTS a try again this year. The convention has gotten a new organisational crew, and it shows. Finally, it seems like FACTS has started listening to the complaints of the past and is taking steps in the right direction again. While I have my doubts about some of these steps, I can only encourage this trend.

THE 2016 FACTS EXPERIENCE

the good and the bad

*An opinion piece that does not have to resort
to calling anyone a freak!*

How did I start my 2016 FACTS experience?

I had checked out all security measurements during the week before the event and found them to be contradicting my health needs, so I e-mailed them to see what would be my best course of action when entering the premises. While I did get a very swift and friendly answer, it was vague and contradictory. It made me unsure on whether I'd actually be allowed and able to enter this event. So far, not a very good start.

Then D-Day came:

when I entered the convention halls, I was expecting the huge entrance queue FACTS had always had before. I was also expecting it to be excruciatingly slow, as all bags and weapons were to be checked before one could enter. What I got instead was a big empty hall with a polite and swift bag check, and a separate stand at which all weapons were thoroughly checked for safety. While I couldn't help but wonder where everyone was ("This is THE convention of the year, why are there so few visitors?!"), it was a pleasant surprise nonetheless.

Once inside, I noticed FACTS had made a magazine including a map of the convention floor and a clear list of guests and activities, something that had been lacking a bit during my past visits. They had neatly divided the halls of Flanders Expo in several domains, such as a fan village, a vendor hall, a game hall, a Q&A auditorium, and so on. Thanks to this well-thought out spacing, the past issue of severe noise hindrance during contests and concerts could be avoided. Everything was also spaced out very nicely, and while there seemed to be a surprisingly small amount of visitors, FACTS seemed to have been fairly well prepared for the overcrowding I had once known.

While making my visits to the separate halls, I noticed FACTS had also taken the food complaints in its stride. The "€12 for a cup-a-noodles"-thing I was used to, had been replaced by several food stands, which were evenly spread over the convention and joined by a food truck outside, hosting a variety of foods at prices that I would deem normal for such a big event. However, while some posters with information about food allergies had been put up, I couldn't help but wonder how many potential allergic attendees might have stayed home, scared off due to FACTS's new "don't bring food from the outside"-policy.

There seemed to be a bigger focus on activities that go beyond meeting celebrities or gaming on set-up consoles again, such as workshops, robot fights (in which an HP printer won from a battle-bot equipped with an axe), speed dating, cosplay parades, and many others. It was nice to see how the current trend of giving fandom groups more possibilities to organise activities at their booths was also done at FACTS. While a major part of FACTS will always be about meeting celebrities for a lot of fans (and they managed to get some big names this edition!), these elements are an important part of what make up the atmosphere of a convention too and should not be neglected.

As I browsed the vendor hall, I noticed there were more unique booths popping up again: the last couple of years I had gone, a big part of the booths had become very monotonous. While the days of finding rare and obscure goodies still seemed to be far off, and repetitiveness could still be found, a step had been made in the right direction. It seemed as though the vendor hall as a whole was much smaller than it used to be though. I spotted less bootleg merchandise than I remember, which is also nice: it used to be that certain vendors had to put up "No bootleg here" signs at their

storefronts, just to convince fans their stuff was legit, unlike their neighbour's... FACTS has also hammered down on the language troubles of the past years, in which a lot of manga fans had complained about the lack of English-language manga sellers.

Some questions and complaints remained, however.

- * Why had they been unable to answer basic questions on visitors with disabilities?
- * Why were they publicly charging toilet fees to booth holders, despite their high booth prices?
- * Why were their security measurements only offhandedly implemented, while so much focus had been given to these on their website and social media?
- * If weapon security was such a big priority, then why allow vendors on the premise to sell the exact type of weapons that were forbidden, such as booths selling unblunted katana's?
- * Will the more rare and exotic booth holders of yesteryear return some day to please us collectors again?

GEEKS AND FREAKS?

I feel a small word is due to the article that *De Morgen* published on the 24th of October regarding this edition of FACTS, in which fans were subjected to offensive descriptions and called a "freak" on multiple accounts.

No matter what my mixed feelings on this convention may be, I'm sad to see how mainstream Belgian newspapers still deem it okay to mock us "geeks and freaks" for not being afraid to truly enjoy our hobbies and break through the mundane, and the organisation of FACTS deserves an honourable mention for the official statement they provided as a reaction to the article *De Morgen* published on the 24th of October.

I had hoped that our overarching geek subculture, of which I would argue the local subculture surrounding Japanese pop culture is a part of, had become a bit more accepted by the mainstream, of which more and more members are trickling down to our world, while elements of our subculture keep floating up to be seen and even loved by the popular eye.

But, I guess we remain meandering, joyfully doing our own colourful thing, defying what the grey majority deems "normal".

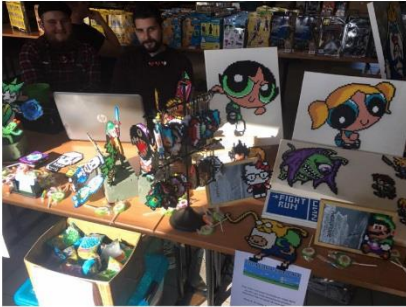
An opinion piece by Lora-Elly Vannieuwenhuysen.



about the author

Lora-Elly Vannieuwenhuysen is an academically published author on popular culture and fandom, as well as long time contributor to BCM.

She is an avid convention go-er, manga reader, anime watcher and one time cosplayer, always looking out for new trends and developments in the fandom, J-culture and pop-culture communities.



Event: Skillzcon
What: Pop-culture convention
When: Saturday, November 5 2016
Where: Parish hall Delle, Herent, Belgium
Ticket price: € 1-3, depending on the formula
Website: look for the facebook event

The organisation did a good job taking its modest size into consideration. Since you could see all there was to see at SkillzCon in less than an hour, this convention compensated for its small size by hosting a bunch of activities such as casual video gaming, gaming competitions, a *Magic The Gathering* tournament, a cosplay contest, a quiz in which the whole audience participate, and even a little bit of stand-up comedy. These provided its visitors with a lot of fun things to do when done browsing and socialising.

As for now, I would not recommend travelling all the way to Herent just for this little event.

If you're a local however, you'll enjoy swinging by the next edition to make new friends and meet local artists. SkillzCon also seems like a good event to go to if you're new to cosplaying and want to join your first contest without being intimidated by the semi-professionals that compete at bigger events. While it's still a very modest convention, I'd be curious to see it grow: after all, a conventions such as FACTS started out with similar roots.

Review by Lora-Elly Vannieuwenhuysen. Photos taken from the Skillzcon Facebook page.

SkillzCon, organised by *SkillznBeatz*, was a small convention held on Saturday, the 5th of November in the parish hall of Winksele-Delle, Herent, Belgium. SkillznBeatz is a small community that organises local geeky events in the Belgian areas surrounding Haacht and Herent.

Let me start off by being honest and stating that I had zero expectations for this convention. It was organised in a small-town parish hall, the poster looked like something more suitable for a late-night party than a convention, and the name does not sound professional at all. Despite my expectations, I was surprised to see that this small event was fairly well organised and had a nice, laid-back atmosphere going for it.

The convention floor consisted out of a main hall containing vendors, a podium, and a bar, and a smaller gaming dungeon in which several consoles were installed. SkillznBeatz had contacted several local vendors to sell items such as Funko's, retro figurines, second-hand videogames, shirts, board games, and so on. They had also invited the *Belgian Potterheads*, *Er Was Eens* (a local organisation that cosplays *Disney* princesses and female superheroes for parties and charity events), local artists *Whiskey Prinses* (nerdy embroidery) and *The Highway To Art* (sprite beading art), and author of historic fantasy *Bruno Buteneers* to come over and promote their work while meeting fans.

They also provided their visitors with a decently priced bar and plenty of seating space.

**"CURIOUS
 TO SEE
 HOW THIS
 CONVENTION
 GROWS AND
 EVOLVES"**





Event: MCM Comic Con Belgium
What: pop culture convention
When: November 5-6 2016
Where: Brussels Expo, Laeken, Belgium
Ticket price: depending on the formula.
Website: www.mcmcomiccon.com/belgium

MCM Comic Con Belgium was held at Brussels Expo during the first weekend of November.

It was the first time Belgian edition of an MCM Comic Con, and hopefully not the last!

Note that we visited this event on Sunday and therefore cannot judge how Saturday went.

Let's get the obvious downers out of the way first.

Downer number 1: I was a bit disappointed by the size of this event. MCM Comic Con is a major name in the European convention world, and therefore a lot of people, including myself, were expecting this to be big. I was expecting something the size of *FACTS* or *Made In Asia*, especially because the high entrance fee. What I got instead was a single expo hall.

As this was only a first edition, this was an understandable move, yet I feel like there could have been more to this.

Downer number 2: MCM Comic Con did a poor job when it comes to timing. It had been planned in June at first, but was moved to November. This change happened after ticket sales had already started, and the refund was quite a messy process. This, combined with the fact that the new date was only two weeks after *FACTS*, which is the biggest Belgian convention there is, resulted in very few people showing up. In fact, attendance numbers on the Sunday were so low that the organisation decided to close down early that day, without clear communication to their guests about this. We only heard the news from one of the stall holders, else our only indication of this would have been several stall holders starting to pack up well before the event was due to end.

These are two major complaints indeed. But, apart from those issues, MCM Comic Con was a good convention. Yes, it was small

and rather overpriced in comparison to local conventions, but it also had a lot of positive points going for it. I think it has the potential to become something really good, on condition that the issues mentioned above are taken into consideration.

While very few visitors showed up, everything at the MCM Comic Con's convention site was spaced out nicely and was clearly organised in a way to accommodate for big crowds. The vendors that had been invited, had very varied goods that appealed to a wide range of interests such as comics, games, manga, fashion, steampunk, Japanorama, and even Korean cosmetics and food. Of course, this was food imported from Asia to be consumed at home, such as noodles in cups with Pokémon print, the actual food that you could consume at the convention was sadly lacking. Ellis Burger was there with their food truck, as well as one other stand that served coffee, tea and ice cream. Not a good variety at all. On the upside, you were allowed to bring your own food and drinks from home.

Aside of these, visitors could meet guests such as *Enver Gjokaj*, *Ian Beattie*, *Eugene Simon*, *Jamie Bamber*, and a range of Youtube celebrities. If celebrities were not your cup of tea, you could stroll through the boots of local fandom organisations, admire the contestants of the cosplay competition, shop, play laser tag or video games, and have your picture taken at a huge centrepiece showing off the MCM Comic Con Logo.

It was nice to see this convention was very kids-friendly. Most conventions do not account for children visiting, apart from occasionally offering discounts. MCM Comic Con however even hosted a kid's corner, which is pretty rare in a country in which most geek events don't even have a place to change diapers at.

Another great thing was the cosplay competition. There was a big focus on crafting skills, and for every winner, the judges specifically announced why this person had won even and had them show off the specific details of their costumes that got them their prize. That's not something you see at the average Belgian convention. While our local judging system has its merits too, it was nice to have a change of pace for once.

In short, the first Belgian edition of MCM Comic Con had its flaws but also its merits. I think it has a lot of potential and I would love to see them return to Brussels, but I also hope the organisation will look at this edition and not dismiss it as a failure, but rather learn from what went wrong and make it into a new success.

Review by Lora-Elly Vannieuwenhuysen. Photography by and provided by Hilde Heyvaert.



Photographic impressions of **MCM COMIC CON BELGIUM**

November 5-6 2016, Brussels Expo, Laeken, Belgium.

Photography by Hilde Heyvaert and Belgian Whovians United.



Photographic impressions of Disneyland Paris' CHRISTMAS SEASON

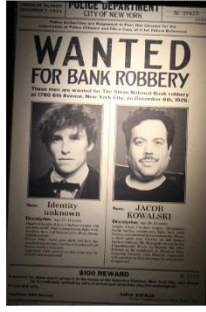
October 1 - November 2 2016, Disneyland Park, Disneyland Paris, Marne-la-Vallée, France.

Photography by ED92 and Disneyland Paris.





EVENT REVIEW: Harry Potter, the Exhibition re-opening



Event: Harry Potter, the Exhibition
Magical Winter Edition
What: Harry Potter themed expo
When: November 12 2016 -
January 8 2017
Where: Brussels Expo, Laeken, Belgium
Ticket price: depending on the formula.
Website: <http://www.expoharrypotter.be>

We have reviewed *Harry Potter, the Exhibition* before (check BCM #29), but hang on, there's a really good reason for us to write about the event again.

For the first time ever, the Belgian leg of this traveling exhibit, has been expanded with new pieces.

And not just pieces from the 8 movies we all know and love, but also with a sizeable display of *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*. That's right, when the expo reopened, the movie wasn't even out yet, and you could already admire exclusive set pieces such as costumes and props. Loved the entire 1920s vibe by the way.

When the expo re-opened on the 12th of November, in the presence of actor *James Phelps* (who plays the part of *Fred Weasley*), it was a great and fun event, that really did the expo justice. Not only did they include the winners of a meet and greet with James (which was a LOT of fun, and very interactive), they also made sure to include the entire gathering crowd that was waiting eagerly for the expo to re-open! That was a really nice touch, and it really contributed to the entire atmosphere of the event.

But now, onto the actual point of this piece: the new pieces. First up: the above mentioned *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*. You can admire three costumes from the movie, and I for one can never get enough of the Roaring 20s so this definitely was my favourite new addition. The costumes weren't the only things though, here was another display case with a good variety of props, and a poster from the movie.

Next up was the giant, living, chess piece *Ron Weasley* rode in *The Philosopher's Stone*. Which is just very cool to see in person. You just don't realise just how big it is until you are directly in front of it, really.

And last but not least: *Arthur Weasley's* flying car: the *Ford Anglia*. For those wondering which model specifically this is, it is a *105E Deluxe*. Sadly this car doesn't fly like it did in *The Chamber of Secrets*, but it's still neat to be able to see it properly in real life. Like with the chess piece, you can walk around it, so you can really see every detail, which is definitely a nice touch, as most exhibition pieces are not visible from literally all sides.

What is also worth mentioning is that several original parts of the exhibition had been changed in a winter wonderland. Both the first hall with the sorting hat and the store had been decorated for Christmas, and the Hogwarts Express is now surrounded by snowfall.

If you are a Harry Potter fan, this is definitely a must see, and you still can until January 8 2017. Don't miss out on this Magical Winter Edition! I know it's short day after the release of this edition, but if you haven't yet and love the Potter-universe, make sure to profit of these last couple of days of the expo to go see it. It won't get another extension, and you'll have to travel abroad if you miss out. Also, this is the FIRST time literally each piece of the exhibition is on display, so you may never get this opportunity again.

Review and photography by Hilde Heyvaert and Bert Van den Wyngaert.



Win a cheki signed by James Phelps!

When we went to the Harry Potter expo reopening party, we were lucky enough to attend the full Q&A and meet actor James Phelps for a quick photoshoot. He was happy to pose for a few instax photos and sign them.

So dear readers, that is what one of you can win: a cheki signed by James Phelps, the actor who portrayed Fred Weasley in the Harry Potter movies, taken here in Belgium last November at Harry Potter re-opening. And yes, this is supposed to be a black and white photo, it was taken using instax monochrome film ;).

All you need to do is explain, in your own way, why you should win this particular (signed) cheki. You can write something, draw something, make a Photoshop collage: anything goes as long as you can send it by email and it is safe for work! So no porn, no smutty fanfic, keep it decent and it's a valid entry ;).

The photo isn't quite as blurry, but as everyone by now knows: my scanner isn't always the most co-operative ><.

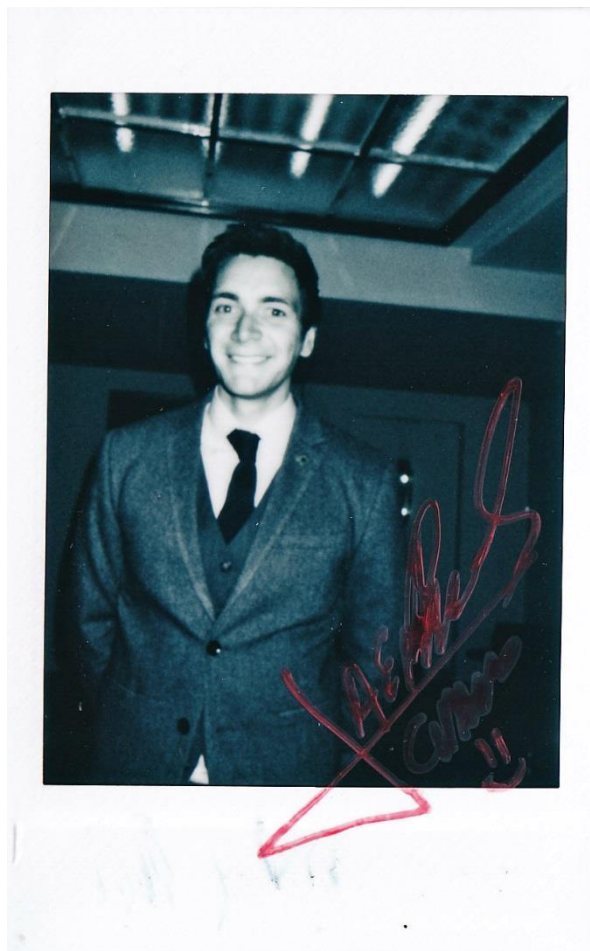
Submissions can be emailed to hilde.heyvaert@gmail.com

The last date for submissions is March 21st, so you still have plenty of time to come up with something!

The winner will be personally notified after the deadline* and asked for their home address so we can mail** out their cheki. Don't worry, your address stays on file with BCM, but will NOT be given to third parties, so your privacy is definitely assured!

* Please take into account that judging takes a bit of time, especially during final editing period of the next edition, so please be patient for the results as it can take a few days for them to be released. We will email everyone that submitted to let them know whether or not they won.

** We rely on regular, unsigned and thus unregistered mail to send out cheki via B-Post and we are no means responsible should the post screw up. They haven't so far and we've sent cheki all over the globe, but you never know so we like to mention this in advance. They can also take quite a while to deliver, so please be patient. Especially if you live outside of Belgium. Shipping to locations outside of Europe may take anything from a handful of days, to a couple of weeks and even a few months.



analog photos of XMAS

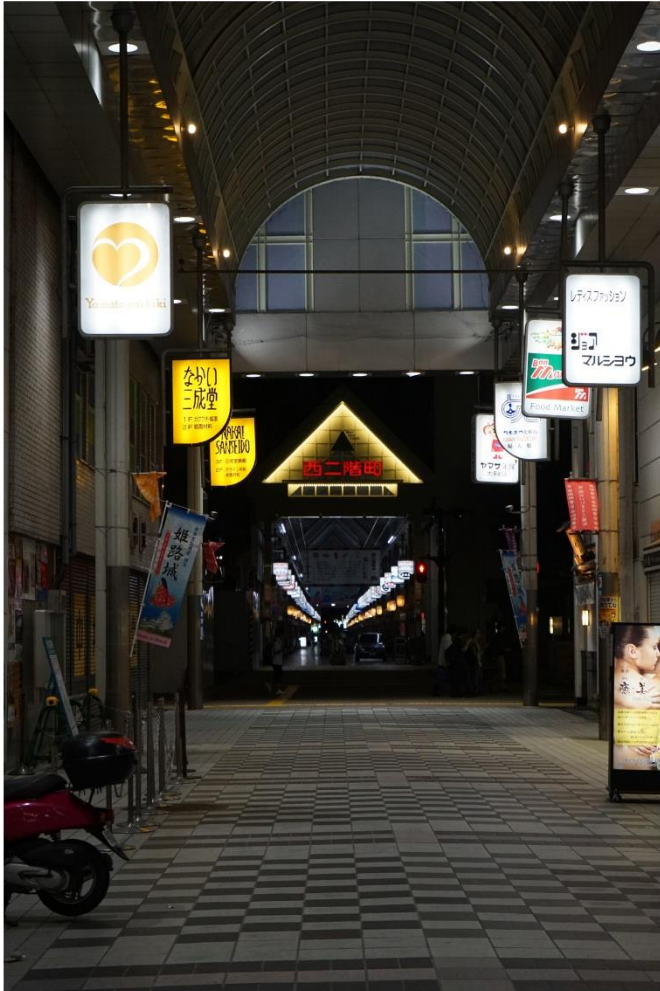
X Made Alcoholic Santaclaus, photographed with two different analog cameras and formats, 120 and 35mm.
Samsung Slim Zoom 115A Panorama (a camera from the late 1990s) with Ilford Delta 3200.
Agfa Click 1 (a vintage medium format camera) with Ilford Delta 100.

Photography by Hilde Heyvaert. #filmisnotdead





helcanen in japan
himeji special



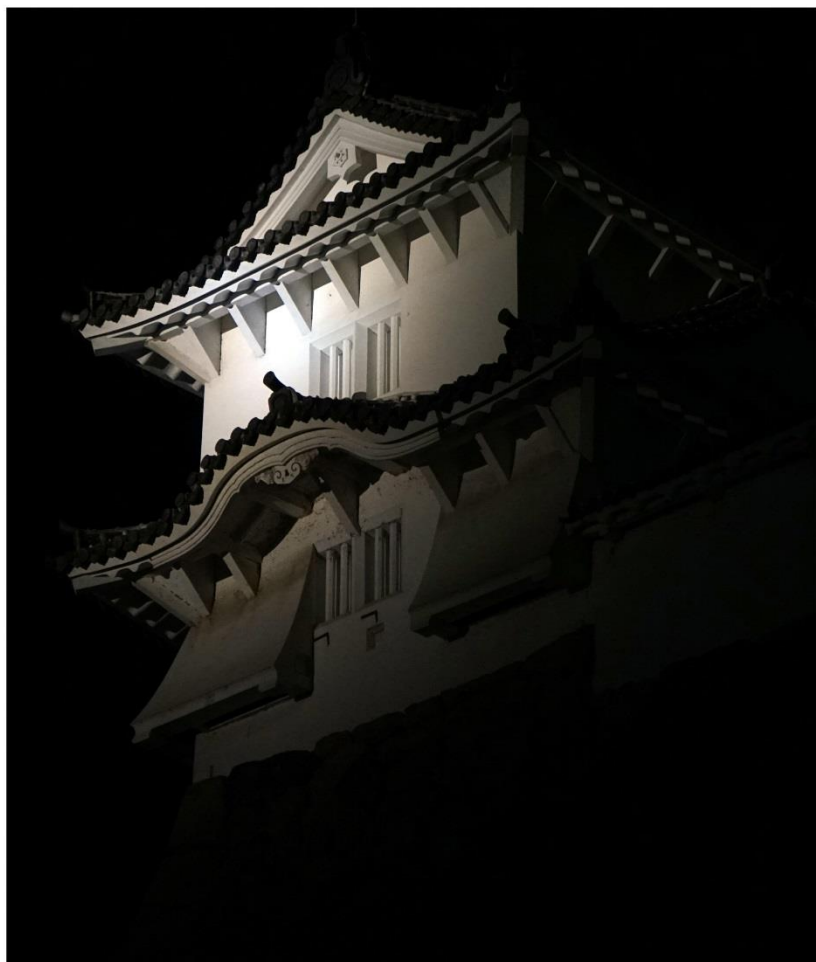
shotengai

the Himeji commercial district



mikoshi

Divine palanquin, portable shrine in Himeji station



Himeji castle
by night







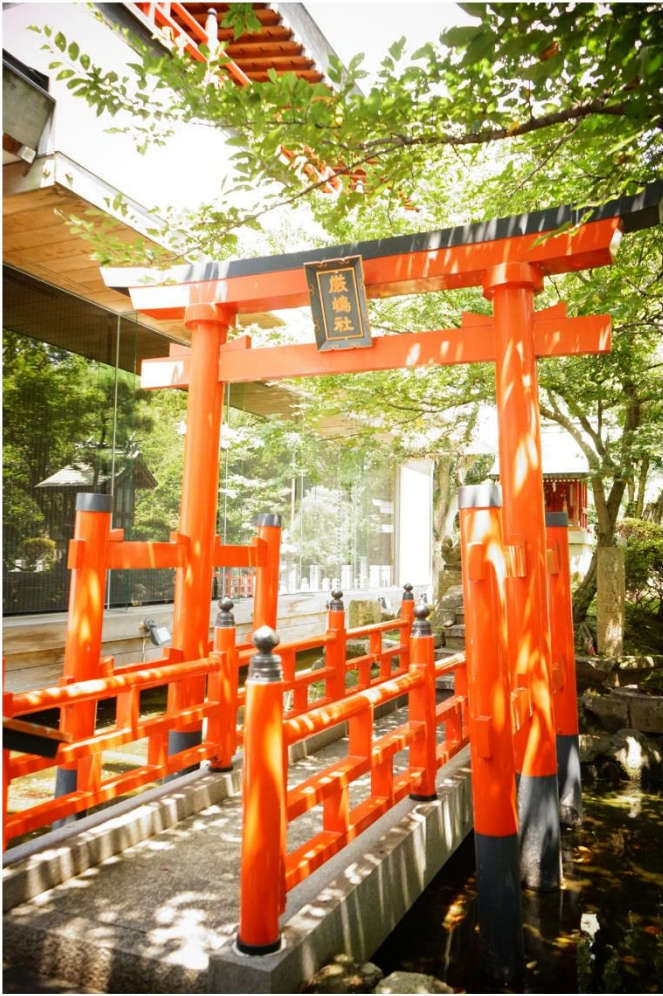


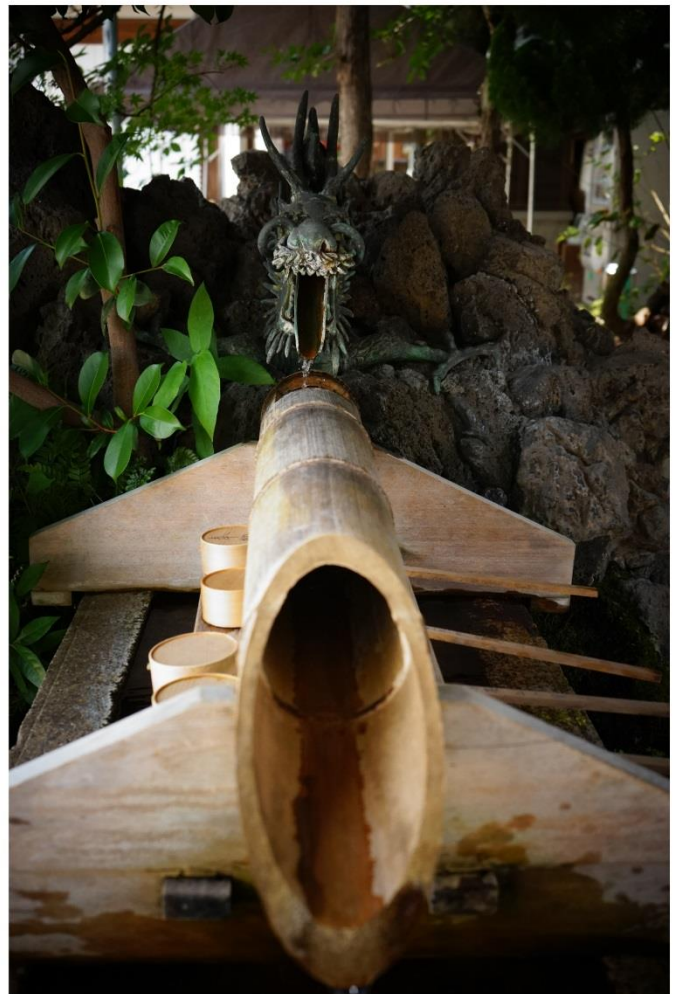


Harimakokusoja shrine



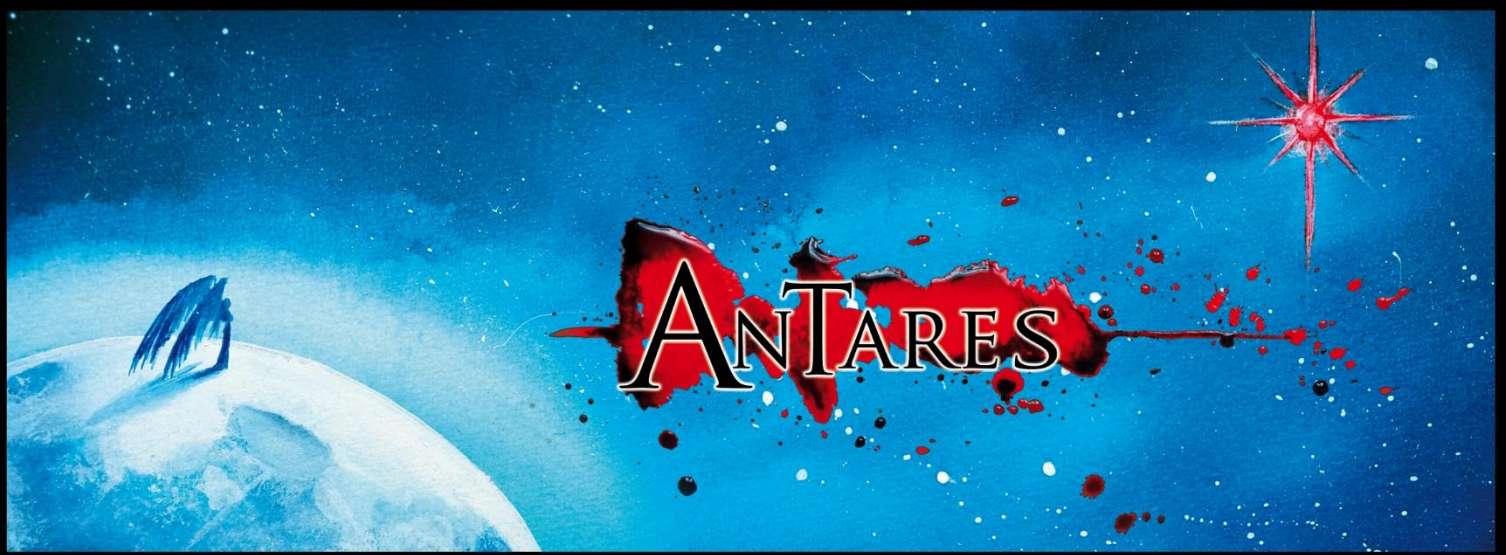












J-MUSIC CORNER

Japanese music reviews and interviews

Reviews by Hilde Heyvaert and Charlotte Ruddick.



CRYSTAL LAKE
"TRUE NORTH"
 Full album
 Genre: Screamo/metalcore

Crystal Lake are a band more down the melodic end of metalcore with a lot of influences from other genres. Definite stand-out tracks on this album are *Metro*, as it has some cleaner vocals. Both this and *Waves* have almost retro nu-metal inspired parts to them, whilst *Six Feet Under* features some nice riffs with hints of death metal. In general, the mellow interludes break up the heaviness quite nicely, making it a well rounded album.

BCM favourite track: *Waves*



PLASTICZOOMS
"PLASTICZOOMS"
 Full album
 Genre: new wave/electro-rock

PLASTICZOOMS's self titled album (which will be released in Europe in February on their European tour, check the calendar for more info) is undoubtedly their best to date. This album contains 9 new songs and the previously released on single *Veiled Eyes*. It's a good solid mix between proper 80ties new wave, with a twist and electro rock and influences of metal and hard rock. Ranging from up-tempo songs with a steady beat that wouldn't go amiss in a club to the more introvert *Breitenbach* and *Minds*. Definitely a must have release of 2017 for any rock music lover.

Available for pre-order via highfeel.kingshop.com

BCM favourite track: *The Future*



Esprit D'Air
"Rebirth"
 One song come-back single
 Genre: metal

After a 3 year hiatus, *Esprit D'Air* is back with *Rebirth*, a new vocalist and lives in the UK and France. Full of loud guitars, melodious vocals. You can listen to it for free on social media and if you like it, purchase the track on *iTunes*. It is definitely a sound that's hard to miss. However, whilst this is definitely a decent song within it's genre, it's very niche. So if you like your metal hard and full of guitar riffs whilst the vocals are well, actual vocals rather than a bunch of screaming and growling, check this out. Otherwise, give it a listen anyway since you can listen to it for free, and it's always fun to give a band you don't know yet a listen.



Season of Ghosts
"Sally's Song"
 one song single
 Genre: soundtrack

This cover is *Season of Ghosts*'s 2016 holiday present to their fans (last year it was first *Sarah's Theme* (from *Hocus Pocus*) and then *Carol of the Bells*). And this year another movie classic cover, good for both Halloween and Christmas is here: *Sally's Song*. *Sophia Sama* definitely does it justice, her voice lends to the track very well, and *Zombie Sam* once again proves that he is a most excellent composer. They made the song their own, without exactly copying the original, yet staying true to it.

Download your own FREE copy via www.seasonofghosts.com



Ena Fujita
"Evil Idol Song"
 EP
 Genre: J-pop with a twist

One thing is for sure, *Ena Fujita* isn't just a J-pop idol like so many others. Listening to just one song by her makes that abundantly clear. Her music is still poppy at the very base, but is riddled with other genres. This, paired with her voice that is much rougher and unpolished than what you would expect from an idol, makes for a very original approach to J-pop and the concept of idols full stop. She isn't just another cute girl with cute upbeat pop tunes. If you like your pop music with a twist and some bite, check her out.

Available globally via London based *JPU Records*.

BCM favourite track: *Koboreru Highlight*



X Made Alcoholic Santa Claus
"Espèce à l'avventure"
 EP
 Genre: loud rock

In honour of their second European tour, *XMAS* released their second album, well EP as it's an eight track. And it's a good one. Their style has clearly changed and evolved to a much more melodious sound. Which is all for the better, because it really suits the band and the voices. *Espèce à l'avventure* has become a varied album, combining styles like screamo, metal and punk under *XMAS*' signature "loud rock" sound. This makes it accessible to all fans of loud music genres. A definite recommendation if you like your hard rock varied and with other genres mixed in.

BCM favourite track: *Clock Tower*

Ancient Myth

Live at Metal Female Voices Fest

Oktoberhallen,

Wieze, Belgium

Saturday, October 22 2016

At first, the audience at *Metal Female Voices Fest* was clearly a little unsure of what to think about the special brand of Japanese metal of *Ancient Myth*, but as the live progressed, more and more people came out to watch the show, and you could see a lot of them really enjoyed it.

Even with the slow start, the band didn't let it get to them, and gave it their best. By the end of the live, a sizeable crowd had gathered, despite the lunch time hour of the concert, when most people were still arriving or outside eating.

Ancient Myth was a great example of a seasoned band that loves what they are doing, and that was perfectly capable of putting on a good show for a crowd that largely had never heard of them, and wasn't there for them either, winning the majority over and getting most moving to their music by the end of the concert.

That the band had grown on the crowd, and had gained many a new fan in Europe, was clear from the number of people showing up for the meet and greet, with a CD bought at the merch desk in hand to have signed

Review by Hilde Heyvaert. Photography by Bert Van den Wyngaert.





Event: *We Are X*
 What: Documentary viewing
 When: November 17 2016
 Where: Rabozaal, Melkweg, Amsterdam
 The Netherlands
 Ticket price: depending on the formula.
 Website: www.wearexfilm.com

Yoshiki's surprise visit to Amsterdam's fans

It was announced less than one week before the date: *Yoshiki* was going to perform at Amsterdam's *Melkweg*, at the *International Documentary Film Festival* to promote the film *We are X*. And it actually happened.

Some artists are able to stir up emotion and passion. *X Japan* and *Yoshiki* are that kind. For better or for worse, their dramatic and successful story is definitely a keystone of Japanese rock history. *Gene Simmons* of the band *KISS* said about *X Japan* that, "If they were born in the United States, they might have been the biggest band in the world." These words are part of the film *We are X*, by *Stephen Kijak*. The movie was presented by *Kijak* and *Yoshiki* themselves at the *Amsterdam IDFA* on November 17.

Yoshiki.

The name, the face of a legendary artist.
 Collapsing on stage after each show, hitting his drums until exhaustion.
 Complicated, cold, demanding. Genius, tormented, and hurt in his body and his mind.
 A businessman, he's always looking for perfection.
 He barely sleeps.
 The public image of *Yoshiki* is also the one described in the movie with a little something extra added: humanity.
 He's shown as the fragile ten year old boy he was when his father committed suicide.
 Then as the angry young man he became...
 "Instead of breaking things, I started banging drums."
 Superstar with *X Japan*, he's shocked by the sudden departure of his best friend and vocalist, *Toshi*, who was recruited and brain-washed by a cult in 1997. Five months after *X Japan*'s final

concert, the band's beloved guitarist *hide* left this world. Suicide or accident, it was never clear, and *Yoshiki* traveled a long and sometimes self-destructive journey until the comeback in 2007. His body is suffering. His neck, arms and lungs are torturing him.
 "I was always looking for a reason to die."
 The film *We are X* is all about the struggles between pain and strength, life and death, success and failure, fragility and resilience.

The movie is visually beautiful and enriched by tons of archival and concert footage, interviews and recordings. The biggest part of the story is about (and probably a bit directed by) *Yoshiki* himself. As the leader of *X Japan*, he gives us some clues about his personal life, We can even see him visiting his orthopedist, and his successful path as a classical artist, fashion designer and businessman.

Fan or not, *We are X* is a must-see, as an authentic documentary about Japanese rock and visual kei.
 In Amsterdam, one of the very few stops of the *We are X* tour, *Yoshiki* presented the movie and offered a very emotional piano show, accompanied by four classical musicians from The Netherlands. For about 20 minutes he played some of his most popular pieces (*Forever Love*, *Without you*, *Art of Life*, *Endless Rain*) while giving anecdotes to the audience. Visibly happy to be there, he also spent quite a long time answering questions from the fans, then embracing and taking selfies with fans who were waiting for him. *Yoshiki* definitely brought all the ingredients for a perfect evening.

There was time for announcements as well: *Yoshiki* confirmed the long-awaited *X Japan* show in London on March 4th.
 Dates & info: www.xjapanmusic.com/Tour.html
 More info: www.yoshiki.net
www.wearexfilm.com

Review and photography by Aurélie Vandecasteele.



Hanging out in Brussels with **X MADE ALCOHOLIC SANTACLAUS**

Friday, December 2 2016; Brussels, Belgium. Tour kick-off.

Photography by Olga Kolisoglou (double exposure shot of Kei) and David Pleszak.



On tour with
X MADE ALCOHOLIC SANTACLAUS

Friday, December 2 2016; Rock Classic, Brussels, Belgium Tour Kick-off.

Photography by Olga Kolisoglou and David Pleszak.



on tour with
X MADE ALCOHOLIC SANTACLAUS

Friday, December 9 2016; EpicCon, Frankfurt, Germany

Photography by David Pleszak.



on tour with
X MADE ALCOHOLIC SANTACLAUS

Friday, December 9 2016; Bar Live 301, Roubaix, France.

Photography by David Pleszak.





ANCIENT MITH

Ancient Myth was the Japanese band that performed at Metal Female Voices Fest this year. We sat down with them (literally, a little while after the interview, for what can only be described as the most lively and fun interview BCM has been part of to date.

Your band is called Ancient Myth, which mythological story is your favourite?

Michal (vocals): I'm actually the most into Greek mythology. My sign is Capricorn, so that's why I like the myth of Pan the best *smiles*. But I also love the Capricorn because of the *Saint Seiya* anime. I often joke that people of our age are of the Saint Seiya generation. A lot of people we meet, and many of our fans, also love that anime.

BCM: So do I it was one of the most popular anime back in the 1980s when it was aired dubbed in French on French tv?

Michal: Really? That's amazing! I love how even in Belgium, we meet people that know and love it *smiles*!

BCM: I love how every chapter and movie of the anime is different, but at the same time the same.

Michal: Yes! I know what you mean!

Hal (keyboards): Have you seen a lot of Saint Seiya?

BCM: Up to the Poseidon arc, that's the last they aired I think.

Hal: Oh, but there is much, much more! They still make Saint Seiya you know! It's called *Saint Seiya Omega*, a kind of next generation.

Yosuke (bass): It's a mix of old and new characters, but mostly new kids. Although one of the new Saints is *Shiryu's* son, he's the new dragon knight.

Michal: See my point *laughs*?

If you could be any mythological creature, what would you be?

Hal: Behemoth! Wait, does that count?

BCM: I don't see why not.

Hal: Great, I'm sticking with Behemoth *grins*.

Michal: *Thinks*... I'd like to be a dragon.

You list several games and anime as your musical inspirations, which game and which anime are your favourite?

Michal: I love *Final Fantasy* and *Devil May Cry*! Really, LOVE it. *Dante* is my hero *laughs*.

Yosuke: *Shouts a quote in Japanese*. *Dante* says that *grins*.

You released your new album "Aberration" in three versions, what made you choose a separate version for English and Japanese in digital format on top of the original, mixed language one?

Michal: You know, that is mostly thanks to our record company. When we were making the new album, we were really in doubt about what language to make it in, because the Japanese and European markets are so different. For instance, in Japan, CDs are still super popular. But in Europe, not so much at all. So, we did want to make a version that would be a little more approachable for people in Europe, but seeing it's so expensive to have CDs made, we decided to follow our record company's advice and make the actual CD a mix of Japanese and English, and release digital versions of each language also. That way everyone can get their favourite language choice *smiles*. It was a conscientious decision we made together with our label.

Your outfits are really cool. Where do you get your inspiration from when putting them together?

Michal: Oh, thank you so much! It's great to hear people love what we wear on stage and in our music videos! You know, because we are all such gamers, we mostly get our inspiration from those. In Japan, the gaming culture is huge, so we are literally immersed in all the costumes the characters wear. It's really very inspiring. I'm also a fashion school graduate, so I'm still super interested in fashion.

Do you work with a specific designer for your stage outfits?

Michal: No we don't, we either make everything ourselves, or buy things. Often, we customise the things we buy. I actually started out studying stage costumes as a fashion student, and by studying those, I realised that for many artists, the stage is a holy place and their costume is extremely important to them. The visual kei scene is a prime example of that. Sadly, the visual kei scene is very much still a men's world because the fandom is mostly composed out of young girls that adore the male members. Which is why you see so few women in V-kei. In the metal scene, most bands just wear t-shirts on stage, and we really want to be different. We want to look our best on stage, not just for ourselves but also for the people that come to our lives *smiles*.

Michal, aside from a singer, you are also a graphic artist, which materials do you enjoy most for your drawings?

Actually I do most of my work digitally so my main tool is Photoshop. I am really enjoying working with the latest version, but I can't honestly remember which one I started out with *smiles*.

Speaking of art who are your all time favourite artists and styles?

Michal: *Hiroshi Nonami* is my all-time favourite photographer. I'm also a huge fan of the style that the *Capcom* graphic artists use. You know how you can look at a game and say: that's by *Capcom*? They have this specific style for all their games that I find very appealing, especially in their older games.

Hal: Like *Street Fighter*! We spent a big portion of the flight playing *Street Fighter* in the plane *shows a photo of the game as in flight entertainment on his smart phone*.

Michal, when I was researching this interview I stumbled onto your instagram and saw all your food photos. What kind of food were you most looking forward to having in Europe?

Michal: Waffles, definitely waffles.

Hal: Chocolate.

Yosuke: MEATBALL!

Yamato (aka Ninja – Guitar): You know, that really big meat ball? Those are amazing!

Yeah I do, we call them boulet. (And that was the point where Ancient Myth learned how to pronounce boulet).

Did you research Belgium before coming here?

Michal: I did, but I have to admit I was mostly attracted by the famous Belgian fashion, especially the legendary *Antwerp Six*! I would absolutely love to visit Antwerp and go to all the stores. Hopefully we can go tomorrow.

BCM: Sadly, almost all shops in Belgium are closed on Sundays.

Michal: Really? How come?

BCM: Because it's tradition, it originally comes from the catholic belief that God created the world in 6 days and rested on the 7th. So on Sunday, people traditionally rest or spend the day with family.

Michal: I like how the pace is slower in Europe, because in Japan, especially in the cities, people really are workaholics, and sometimes even work themselves to death. Sure, it's practical that you can go to the post office 24/7, to give an example, but people do need to rest in time. It's too bad though, because I would have loved to go shopping!

How did you experience the live at MFVF earlier today?

Michal: You know, it was really good. It's our first time overseas and we knew beforehand that Japanese and European cultures are very different and the audience response would likely be different also. But a lot of people in the audience were very responsive from the start. That really gave us a lot of courage and made us very happy. I feel that it's good to be out of your comfort zone you know, I believe this experience was a great one, and it will really help the band grow positively *smiles*. Aside from that, the people we meet here are all very kind *smiles*.

Are there any band performing at the festival you would still like to see live?

Michal: Absolutely! I want to see *Crescent Lament*, they are the other Asian band performing today, from Thailand. And actually, as I work as concert staff and a promoter in Japan quite often, so I have been lucky to be able to see a lot of bands performing here when they were on a Japanese tour. I did miss out on seeing *Leaves Eyes* before, so I'm happy I get a second chance tonight when they are headlining. I'm definitely going to make up for that missed opportunity *grins*.

Are there plans to come back to Europe for a full tour in 2017?

Hal: Absolutely!

Michal: We are 80% sure we are going to do a European tour next year. We just need to start planning everything really well so we can definitely make it happen. We would absolutely love to come back and perform more concerts *smiles*.

Find Ancient Myth online:

Website: www.ancient-myth.com

YouTube: www.youtube.com/user/ANCIENTMYTHofficial

Twitter: twitter.com/ancientmyth

Michal's instagram: www.instagram.com/michal666jp

日本には本物の忍者が残っています。
待っているのです。その目で確かめてネ。

h/ko

ゲームとアニメと、オリジナリティあふれる
ハイクォリティがある日本。あそびに来て
ください。

はる。

おもてなし

I'm ~~not~~ waiting for you

To Suke

日本には

秘密がたくさん
ありますよ!!

もっと日本を

好きになっぺね♡

Michel
on vocal

ベルギーに比べたら

ビールは少ないけど

日本には日本酒(SAKE)が
たくさんあるよ!

日本を君が愛してる♡

Je t'aime

Win a cheki signed by Ancient Myth!

When we interviewed Ancient Myth, we of course asked them if they would be ok with running a cheki competition for their fans, to which they happily agreed.

So dear readers, that is what one of you can win: a cheki signed by Ancient Myth, taken here in Belgium last October at Metal Female Voics Fest.

All you need to do is explain, in your own way, why you should win this particular (signed) cheki. You can write something, draw something, make a Photoshop collage: anything goes as long as you can send it by email and it is safe for work! So no porn, no smutty fanfic, keep it decent and it's a valid entry ;).

The photo isn't quite as blurry, but as everyone by now knows: my scanner isn't always the most co-operative ><.

Submissions can be emailed to hilde.heyvaert@gmail.com

The last date for submissions is March 21st, so you still have plenty of time to come up with something!

The winner will be personally notified after the deadline* and asked for their home address so we can mail** out their cheki. Don't worry, your address stays on file with BCM, but will NOT be given to third parties, so your privacy is definitely assured!

* Please take into account that judging takes a bit of time, especially during final editing period of the next edition, so please be patient for the results as it can take a few days for them to be released. We will email everyone that submitted to let them know whether or not they won.

** We rely on regular, unsigned and thus unregistered mail to send out cheki via B-Post and we are no means responsible should the post screw up. They haven't so far and we've sent cheki all over the globe, but you never know so we like to mention this in advance. They can also take quite a while to deliver, so please be patient. Especially if you live outside of Belgium. Shipping to locations outside of Europe may take anything from a handful of days, to a couple of weeks and even a few months.





The renaissance of
VERSAILLES

VERSAILLES is back and how!

Their resurrection not only brings new CD (*Lineage*), but a big international tour, a greatest hits album, and of course: joy to their many fans all over the world

We spoke to the band about what it's like to be back for more.

Do you feel like there have been many changes to the band after your reunion? In what ways specifically was the reunion a renaissance for you as a musician?

KAMIJO (vocals): Actually in *VERSAILLES*, we're asking each other to be original individuals. Each member has their own opinion and own needs and this fact can help each of us to go to the next step. I think that it's a nice, challenging situation.

MASASHI (bass): I think that the band is becoming more stimulated with the technical and expressive progress of each member.

TERU (guitar): I think the relationship of the members has changed after the hiatus. And I see this affects our music in a positive way.

HIZAKI (guitar): I'm looking forward to show the technical progress that grew during the hiatus.

YUKI (drums): I feel the growth of each member and I think that it affects to our new songs.

Do you feel like your fans have changed a lot in the time you were on break?

KAMIJO: It seems that there are many people who don't know about our return. I'm looking forward to charm them around the world.

TERU: I don't know yet but I'm looking forward to feel the difference.

HIZAKI: I want to see all those who came to see us in the past, and figure it out.

What was the first thing that went through your head when you realised the band was back together?

KAMIJO: A wish to being the number 1 with these members.

MASASHI: I wish to make a bigger dream come true.

TERU: A feeling of expectation.

HIZAKI: I was thinking about a world tour.

YUKI: A positive future.

You are returning to Europe for a tour soon, what are you looking forward the most about touring the EU again?

KAMIJO: I am looking forward to sing our famous songs, but also to sing our new songs.

MASASHI: I'm looking forward of all of it, really.

TERU: I want to enjoy the culture of each country more.

HIZAKI: I'm looking forward to seeing old and new fans.

YUKI: I'm looking forward to seeing all fans who awaited our return.

Is there a place in the EU you have not performed yet, but that is definitely a dream venue to play in the future?

KAMIJO: The palace of Versailles.

MASASHI: The palace of Versailles for me as well.

TERU: The same!

HIZAKI: I'd love to perform on the moon.

YUKI: For me also it is the palace of Versailles.

Is there anything you definitely want to do different this EU tour? Both as a band on the whole.

KAMIJO: I want to find a deeper vision of the world. Because I usually attach greater importance to the atmosphere of lives abroad than I do to lives in Japan.

MASASHI: I want to show a stronger *VERSAILLES*.

TERU: We are used to being famous with our looks. But I want to show off our musical skills, too.

HIZAKI: I want to be a higher calibre musician.

YUKI: I'm sure that you can see us powered up.

In how far do you continue to be inspired by the actual Versailles castle and the historical events attached to it?

KAMIJO: The elegant melodies through the gorgeous times, and the sound as well, heavy and dark like we see in the French Revolution. I want to establish both in the future.

TERU: Not only on the musical side, but I want it to also affect our costumes and extend to the CD artwork as well.

HIZAKI: It would be nice if we can also express the feeling of the people of those times.

You are performing in eight different countries on your upcoming tour. Can you name one thing that each country is famous for?

KAMIJO: I hope that after this tour, the most famous thing in all of these countries will be *VERSAILLES*.

MASASHI: Vodka for Russia, the sauna for Finland, Big Ben in London for the UK, beer for Germany, *Pielogi* for Poland, the torero bull fighters for Spain, the palace of Versailles for France.

TERU: Russian Space Development, *Sana village* of Finland, *Stonehenge* in England, the *Berlin wall* of Germany, *Frederic Chopin* of Poland, the *Invincible Armada* of Spain, *Eiffel Tower* of France.

HIZAKI: You!

YUKI: Versailles fans.

What, other than perform of course, do you definitely want to do or see in each country?

KAMIJO: This time, I'm especially looking forward to seeing fans at our lives. If we had more time, I would definitely hold more concerts.

MASASHI: To see our fans in each country.

TERU: I always like to look around different cities, so sightseeing.

HIZAKI: Churches, I love visiting churches.

YUKI: See the fans and drink beer.

HIZAKI, you are known for wearing absolutely beautiful dresses on stage. Can you tell us a little about how you go about creating each piece?

To be honest, if they left it up to me entirely I would think up the same dress over and over again. So I have recently started to not only take in our costume designer's ideas but also those of the fans. Now we incorporate what they would like to see me into those designs.

You are going to release a new album, *Lineage*, next year. Can you tell us a little more about it?

KAMIJO: The plan is to make the new album available exclusively at the concert at *Nippon Budokan*. I really do apologise to our overseas fans. To be honest it's all about the synchronisation with that particular live. Thank you for your understanding.

Next year is the 10th anniversary of the band, congratulations. Are you planning any special celebrations?

KAMIJO: Of course. Those will all become clear in the future, so please be patient 'till we are ready to release the news!

MASASHI: I would like to do something to make you happy.

HIZAKI: I want to make the year a special one.

YUKI: Please look forward of our news.

What are you looking forward the most in 2017?

KAMIJO: The EU tour and the live at *Nippon Budokan*. Let's make the year 2017 the best one!

MASASHI: The EU tour, and the live at *Nippon Budokan*.

TERU: The live at *Nippon Budokan*. I want to act ambitiously.

HIZAKI: Touring the whole world.

YUKI: Meeting with fans of different countries.

Find *VERSAILLES* online:

Website: <http://chateau-agency.com/versailles>

Twitter: twitter.com/versailles_p_q

Facebook: www.facebook.com/WeAreVersailles

Interview by Hilde Heyvaert, Charlotte Ruddick and Claire Van Laere. Photography provided by B7kian.



Christmas themed adventures with
**X MADE ALCOHOLIC
SANTACLAUS**



X MADE ALCOHOLIC SANTACLAUS, XMAS for short, was back in Europe for a 7 date tour, bringing their signature loud rock sound to their many fans all across the EU. We caught up with them on one of their break days, to talk about just how much into Christmas the band is, and other things.

Aside from the concerts, what are you looking forward to most this EU tour?

Charlie (guitar): Nothing *laughs*! I'm joking. The usual things really: sightseeing, going to the local supermarkets, even the long drives in the car to gigs. Seeing all my friends I haven't seen in ages. But honestly, I'm a musician, and the lives are what I really do look forward to the most *smiles*.

Masaya (guitar): Drinking beer and wine I guess *grins*.

Kei (vocals and bass): I'd have to agree with Charlie.

You have just released your second album, *Espèce à l'aventure*, how have people reacted to it so far?

Charlie: Oh the reactions have been great! People really like the new album. Maybe it is because our sound has evolved and when it comes to the composition of the songs, they are a little more J-pop in style, which makes our sound more approachable? In any case, we are really happy that fans are so enthusiastic about it!

Which song from the new album is your favourite to play live?

Charlie: *Choice for Face*. Because it's in our brand new style and it is very varied. It has groovy parts and then slow parts and a really good melody.

Masaya: *The Gift*.

Yu-ta (drums): *Rise Up*.

Kei: *Glow*.

You are about to do a crazy 2 lives in 2 countries in just one day, how do you prepare for something like that?

Charlie: Well, we always drink alcohol, all night long *laughs*. No I'm joking! Overall, this tour has a really good schedule, especially with a few days to get over the jetlag at the beginning and the break days in the middle. To be honest, I'm going to prepare for these two lives like I do for every live.

Masaya: I'm definitely going to make sure that I'll be well rested.

Yu-ta: Nothing really.

Kei: I'll be sure to stay very well hydrated and to take really good care of my voice. I do that for all the lives anyway, but for these I'll take extra good care.

What was the best moment of the tour so far?

Charlie: The day after our live in Berlin, it was a super cold morning. The grass was covered in hoarfrost and the mist was so thick you couldn't see through it. It was almost scary, but very, very atmospheric. I loved it *smiles*.

Masaya: The *Grand Place* of Brussels, completely decked out for Christmas.

Yu-ta: The bartender in Berlin singing karaoke, because he had a beautiful voice.

Kei: *The Berlin Wall*, I found that incredibly impressive.

You meet a lot of fans on tour and they often bring presents. What was the best present on this tour?

Charlie: Oh man, you would NOT believe how much Haribo candy we have received this tour! *Jumps up to show us several bags of candy*

Masaya: It's great, I feel we're set 'till our next EU tour *laughs*.

Charlie: I love the candy, and I love all the Santa goods I've received.

Masaya: Yeah, me too.

Yu-ta: Those are my favourites as well.

Kei: I know it's boring, but I have to agree with the rest of the guys.

You've been posing with all kinds of Christmas themed things. Which has been the most awesome Christmas tree so far?

Charlie: The ones in Berlin and that on the *Grand Place* in Brussels.

Masaya: When we walked to the car in Berlin, there was a huge amount of trees set up. There were just so many of them and that was awesome. So I'd have to say the Christmas trees of Berlin *smiles*.

Yu-ta: I haven't found the ultimate tree yet, but I'm definitely on the look-out for it. Hopefully I'll find it during the second half of the tour.

Kei: I also loved the one in Brussels the most, especially with the lighting on all the surrounding buildings, I loved all of that.

If you were to cover one traditional Christmas song, XMAS style, which one would it be?

Charlie: *Thinks* I love Christmas songs so I'm having a hard time choosing just one. But I guess I'd have to go with the ultimate classic: *Jingle Bells*.

Masaya: The ultimate Japanese Christmas classic by Yumi Matsutaya: *Koibito wa Santaclaus* *smiles*.

Charlie: That means: *my lover is Santaclaus*, everyone in Japan knows it *grins*!

Yu-ta: One from *John Mayer's* Christmas album, I really like those.

Kei: *Sings* *Rudolph the red nosed reindeer* *smiles*. That's my favourite *smiles*.

If you had to have one drink with Santa, what would you drink?

Charlie: Japanese sake!

Masaya: I really like the Korean alcohols, so I'd drink one of those with him.

Yu-ta: *Captain Morgan*.

Kei: Tequila.

What does your perfect Christmas look like?

Masaya: Cliché as it no doubt sounds, but a Christmas spent with family is the best in my opinion *smiles*.

Charlie: I want a lot of sexy girls, presents and alcohol. Then Christmas would be PERFECT!

Everyone bursts into laughter.

BCM: So basically you are hoping that for your next tour, a lot of girls will show up wearing sexy Christmas outfits?

Charlie: YES! That is exactly what I was aiming at!

BCM: Well, there you have it people, a request from Charlie for his next EU tour: *dress up in sexy Christmas outfits*.

Charlie: YES! Please do it *laughs*.

Yu-ta: Funny as Charlie's choice is, I'm going to have to join Masaya, I think a family Christmas is the best as well.

Kei: I just want to drink lots to be honest *chuckles*.

It's nearly the new year, what are your plans for 2017?

Charlie: I want to do all the awesome things we've done this year over again! I want to come back to the EU for another tour, write a lot more songs, shoot more music videos and at least release one other single, but preferably more music than just that!

Masaya: All of what Charlie just said. And I want to sing more.

Charlie: Just do more things that are fun and interesting in general.

Yu-ta: I would love for us to perform at one of the big festivals in Japan. Like *Fujirock Fest* or *Summer Sonic*, that would be a dream come true for me, personally.

Kei: Drink, drink, drink *laughs*.

And to end this interview, a joke question. Which one of Aurélie's pets is your favourite?

(Aurélie is the band's tour manager for Europe and CEO of HIGHFeel/REALive, she has 5 cats and a dog).

Masaya: *Daikon*.

Charlie: I honestly can't choose, I like them all so much! And they all have their own unique personality, I really can't choose!

Yu-ta: *Daikon*.

Kei: *Thinks* *Enichi*.

Just as an FYI, *Daikon* is the dog, and *Enichi* is one of the cats.

Find XMAS online:

Website: <http://x-mas045.com>

Twitter: twitter.com/Xmas045

Facebook: www.facebook.com/xmas045

Instagram: www.instagram.com/xmas_yokohama_jp

Want to buy XMAS goods from a EU based supplier?
www.highfeel.kingeshop.com and then click XMAS

Interview and photography by Hilde Heyvaert (analog, monochrome) and Bert Van den Wyngaert (digital, colour).





Merry XMAS
Ann

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Or
Thank you!!

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Win a cheki signed by X Made Alcoholic Santaclaws!

When we interviewed XMAS, we of course asked them if they would be ok with running a cheki competition for their fans, to which they happily agreed.

So dear readers, that is what one of you can win: a cheki signed by XMAS, taken here in Belgium last month when we met up with them for an interview during one of their off-days.
We are giving away not one, but two photos, so TWO lucky fans will be able to win a signed photo!

All you need to do is explain, in your own way, why you should win this particular (signed) cheki.
You can write something, draw something, make a Photoshop collage: anything goes as long as you can send it by email and it is safe for work! So no porn, no smutty fanfic, keep it decent and it's a valid entry ;).

The photo isn't quite as blurry, but as everyone by now knows: my scanner isn't always the most co-operative ><.

Submissions can be emailed to hilde.heyvaert@gmail.com

The last date for submissions is March 21st, so you still have plenty of time to come up with something!

The winner will be personally notified after the deadline* and asked for their home address so we can mail** out their cheki. Don't worry, your address stays on file with BCM, but will NOT be given to third parties, so your privacy is definitely assured!

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8 April 2017, Etterbeek Brussels

COALESCAREMONIUM

www.

.info

PAGAN ELECTRICS



A Grandioso Gothic Happening in a Revamped Monastery

Join the fifth anniversary of Coalescaremonium [Brussels Gothic Happening] and experience a grand day in a magical setting with bands, DJs, fashion, art and dance spectacles starring:



EMPUSAE

Inkubus
Sukubus



AGEIS+

ana
mikelson
//costume art



HYBRYDS

MIREXXX

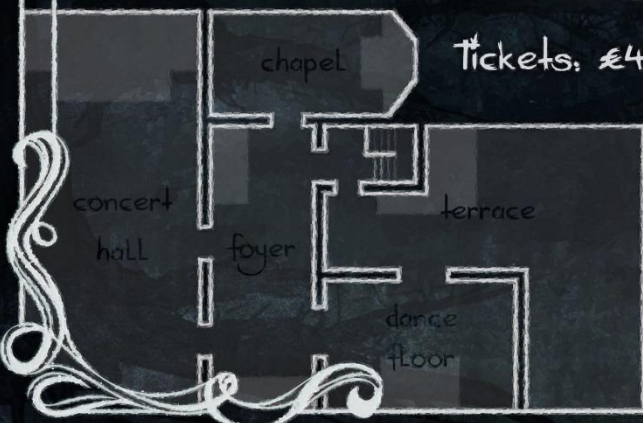
FELINE
@strange

Tickets: €45 | Doorsale: €50 | Start: 15h | End: 03h

Location: Bouche à Oreille

Place Van Meÿel 16, 1040 Etterbeek, Belgium

Train/Bus/Metro: Schuman | Parking: Jubelpark



EVENT CALENDAR

All dates and information may be subject to change, none of this is within our control.

January

A feverish era in Japanese art

Date: until 22/1/2017

Venue: Bozar

City: Brussels

Country: Belgium

www.bozar.be

**VERSAILLES Europe Tour 2017
"Renaissance"**

26: Teatr Club, Moscow, Russia

27: Gloria, Helsinki, Finland

29: Islington Academy, London, UK

www.b7klan.com

February

Ukiyo-e

The finest Japanese prints

Date: until 12/2/2017

Venue: Cinquantenaire Museum

City: Etterbeek (Brussels)

Country: Belgium

www.kmkg-mrah.be

**VERSAILLES Europe Tour 2017
"Renaissance"**

1: Zeche, Bochum, Germany

2: Hybrydy, Warsaw, Poland

4: Salmandra, Barcelona, Spain

5: La Machine, Paris, France

www.b7klan.com

MCM Midlands Comic Con

Date: 11

Venue: International Centre

City: Telford

Country: UK

www.mcmcomiccon.com/midlands

PLASTICZOOMS on tour

24: Urban Spree, Berlin, Germany

25: Monarch, Berlin, Germany

26: venue tba, Poznan, Poland

#plasticzooms2017

www.highfeel.jp



March

Made in Asia

Date: 3 – 5

Venue: Brussels Expo

City: Laeken (Brussels)

Country: Belgium

www.madeinasia.be

PLASTICZOOMS on tour

3: Made in Asia, Laeken, Belgium

4: Made in Asia, Laeken, Belgium

4: Rock Classic, Brussels, Belgium
(evening, free live)

5: Made in Asia, Laeken, Belgium
(fan meet, NO concert)

8: Blue Shell, Cologne, Germany

9: P60, Amstelveen, The Netherlands

12: Le Garage, Liège, Belgium

17: DIY Café, Lille, France

18: venue tba, Paris, France

31: Chapeau Rouge, Prague,
Czech Republic

#plasticzooms2017

www.highfeel.jp



PLASTICZOOMS fan meet

Date: 5

Venue: Made in Asia convention,
Brussels Expo

City: Laeken (Brussels)

Country: Belgium

#plasticzooms2017

Info: www.highfeel.jp

Tickets: www.madeinasia.be

MCM Liverpool Comic Con

Date: 11 & 12

Venue: Exhibition Centre

City: Liverpool

Country: UK

www.mcmcomiccon.com/liverpool

**Kingdom Hearts Orchestra
World Tour**

18: Salle Pleyel, Paris, France

19: Salle Pleyel, Paris, France

24: Central Hall Westminster,
London, UK

25: Central Hall Westminster,
London, UK

www.wildfaery.com/info/

index.php/en/kingdom-hearts

April

PLASTICZOOMS on tour

1: Voodoo Club, Warsaw, Poland

14: La Salle Gueule, Marseille, France

15: Mang'Azur, Toulon, France

17: venue tba, Montreux, Switzerland

21: venue tba, Copenhagen, Denmark

22: venue tba, Budapest, Hungary

#plasticzooms2017

www.highfeel.jp

Coalescaremonium

Pagan Electrics

Date: 8

Venue: Bouche à Oreille

City: Etterbeek (Brussels)

Country: Brussels

www.coalescaremonium.info



May

Dapper Day at Disneyland Paris

Date: 6

Venue: Disneyland Paris

City: Marne-la-Vallée

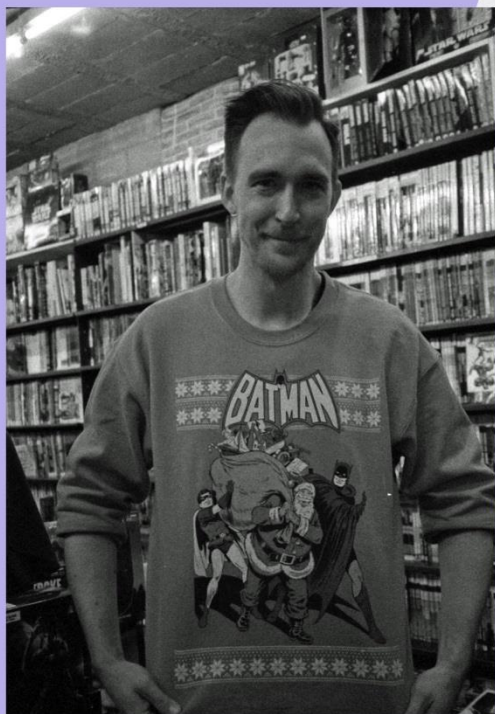
Country: France

Info: www.dapperday.com

Tickets: www.disneylandparis.com

CHECK THAT CHEKI

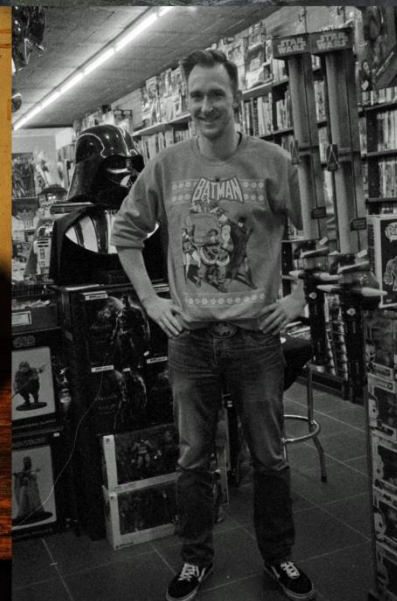
want to be on the next edition's check that cheki page? Just submit one!



And one analog photo, because #filmisnotdead

BCM SNAP

Want to be in the next edition's Snap page?
Send a photo of yourself wearing J-fashion, any kind will do, or steampunk (due to the current popularity of the style in Japan)
to hilde.heyvaert@gmail.com
and you may very well see yourself featured in the next edition!



MCM COMIC CON SNAP

Sunday, November 5-6 2016; Brussels Expo, Laeken, Belgium.

Photography by Hilde Heyvaert.





X Made Alcoholic Santaclaws, aka XMAS, in Brussels, Belgium.

Photo by David Pleszak ©